

ST REPORT WEEKLY ONLINE MAGAZINE

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=====['The Original Online ST Magazine']=====

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AVAILABLE ON: COMP-U-SERVE ~ DELPHI ~ GENIE ~ THE SOURCE
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From the Editor's Desk;

Greetings to all... As we have Comdex at the door, I am relieved to let you all know Atari is on the march once again. We will, for the duration of Comdex, provide daily bulletins about the comings and goings at Comdex.

This is the time of the year we all begin to feel a little better about ourselves and the folks around us, hopefully, with this attitude we all can begin a renewed belief in Atari and in each other. Especially since it is the beginning of the holiday season. In all fairness to Atari we wish to ask each one of you to encourage more openness from Atari and above all else, more receptive channels on Atari's part to hear what things the userbase would like to see come to pass.

Some of you may have attended the CO on 11/09/88, and saw what took place...for those of you who missed the Convention Center Fiasco, it is included here for all to see. In addition, we have certain information in our possession which refutes the derogatory capture uploaded to the conference area. We have included that also. Hopefully, this will

dispell any stories that may have developed as a result of this wanton disregard of the truth.

To those of you who stood by us because you knew the truth we extend our warmest gratitude. To those who were not sure or felt we were in the 'grey' area we extend our hand in friendship. Lastly to those who had us dead and buried..... sorry to disappoint you! <<Grin>>

Ralph Mariano

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NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

CIS Conference with ST Report
=====

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] okay folks. welcome to the CO.

To ask a question, you must type /QUE to get in line.

I'll enable you to speak one by one. Ron Kovacs and Ralph Mariano
can speak at anytime.

Ron has some opening comments. right?

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] Correct

Thanks for attending this CO. Before we begin I would

like to just give a small..history of how this all started.

Before ST-Report there was Zmag, which Ralph Mariano had a part in as a
columnist....

In time we thought about starting the 16 bit magazine in an effort... to follow the same course that Zmag had taken...We went from a monthly newsletter to bi-weekly to weekly and then to the trusted hands of Ralph Mariano (IE: Rex Reade). The course of STR has gone from nothing to the outspoken newsletter it is because of the efforts..of Ralph Mariano... I will let Ralph make an opening statement at this time.. GA Ralph.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Thank You.

At this time I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Ron Kovacs for wearing many hats in his guidance of myself and ST Report. Primarily he always emphasized that we provide the facts and make sure they were true even if amplified or magnified. I really would like to express my sincere thanks to everybody for their support, both positive and negative for in truth, support is support. Let the questions begin.

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] okay....

to ask a question, type /QUE. ...

who wants to start? okay. Let me toss the 1st one out....

Ralph:....besides the obvious article reprints....like the Oren tutorials about GEM....where do you get most of your weekly material? ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] I am very glad you asked that question. There are a number of things I would like to comment about this first..we have been asked, accosted, accused etc...of reprinting material without permission where I did transgress somebody's rights I got in touch with them personally and apologized in all instances I have found that once I spoke to these folks and gave them the reason: ST Report is not only seen by the folks on the major services but in fact the trickle down through private bulletin boards to user groups and ultimately to users without modems magnifies our goal to reach all the Atari users. About obtaining our material it is a very tedious and sometimes tiring job. I cannot in all fairness to my sources..... make any revelations that may jeopardize their secure positions

% Moderator recognizes queue #1

Dick_H <1>

(Dick_H)[76615,2013] ok...

Ralph, from reading some of your messages on the Atari boards recently I feel that you are somewhat optimistic about...Atari's future. If this is right, could you tell us why. ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Atari certainly does have a future. I am sure everyone in this convention center..will agree, Atari makes the finest computer we can get our hands on and is perhaps one of the most difficult computer companies to understand. The have a definite future worldwide before them..all they need do is see it.ga.

(Dick_H)[76615,2013] Could you suggest how they do this?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] My observation would be acquiring a top notch marketing department and leaving it in place long enough to have results. In addition...The current executives need to focus on their responsibilities respectively and in so doing place the additional personnel needed to remove the ridiculous workload from the current group of employees. ga.

% Moderator recognizes queue #2

GLENN GORMAN <13>

(GLENN GORMAN)[75706,2474] RALPH, HOW COME IT WAS NEVER MENTIONED WHY
RON'S NAME DOES NOT APPEAR IN ST-ST-REPORT ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Glenn, by the way, your BBS, The Cave
looks good. Now, Ron is responsible for Zmag and I for ST Report We
are co-publishers of Both magazines In other words, Ron is Zmag and
I ST Report and we are both full partners in all our ventures.
ga.

% Moderator recognizes queue #3
JOHN NAGY <4>

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] Maybe you both can comment more about WHO your
magazines are. This also refers to, of course, your use of the
Psudonym REX READE, Ralph...How many people make up these magazines,
and who are they?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Certainly....allow me to clarify, the
business of our magazines...and the individuals contributing to these
magazines are our business unless they request to be made known to the
readers. ga.

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] what?????

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] You wont reveal who is on the staff of each mag?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Sorry, didn't stutter

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] I can speak for ZMag.
Zmag is made up of 3-4 people who research material I give them.
I am the sole publisher and editor of the magazine and ST-
Reports staff is the business of RF Mariano.... The people involved
with ZMag are NOT involved with ST-Report and will never be.
RF Mariano has the right not to tell us who the specific people are,
if he so chooses, in my opinion. ga

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] are you saying that the identities of the people
whio we are trusing to tell us what to believe are not our business?
It occurs to me that few publications have flourished as secret
societies...go on. maybe someone has a question you like.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] I will answer you as best I can...
First: As with ANY probing periodical its sources of information must
be protected at all costs. to witness you, Mr. Nagy become somewhat
melodramatic and accusatory insults the level of your education...nobody
TELLS you what you have to believe....GA

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] Sources, yes they are protected.
But reporters never have had such a personal sheild! ga.

% Moderator recognizes queue #4
Pattie Rayl <12>

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] Ralph, I have two questions...1st...Why did you use the
Rex Reade name? Was it to protect you or
to hide behind?
ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] The Rex Reade name was not used but developed so that now when one sees an article written by Rex they know what to expect. Hiding, no I don't hide if it were a question of hiding...Ralph Mariano would not be here....ga

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] I see...so, are you then saying that Rex is a "state of being" not necessarily a person?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] You could say that....or one could easily take the Rex Reade thing for face value and not try to read anything into it....ga.

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] What do you feel is your contribution to the ST world? ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] REX READE...GA

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] sheesh!

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] Hmm...guess I have to leave it at that.

% Moderator recognizes queue #6
ROBERT <3>

(ROBERT)[73457,2135] I'm a bit concerned about the professionalism... of ST REPORT/ZMAG, specifically with....the tabloid-like reporting, the "protecting" of reports....(reporters that was supposed to say) ... and the "tantrums"....that appear from time to time (we are no longer.... going to be on genie one week....

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] This is not GENie...and those problems are solved and behind us....ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] okay, lets go on to the next user.

% Moderator recognizes queue #7
Elwood <11>

(Elwood)[76057,3210] I have some MAJOR concerns here with you Ralph!
Ok here we go...Ralph, Would you agree that Atari's True Domestic Problems Really Stem from Piracy? And if So! Then WHY! do you run a 380Meg Pirate Board and How do you expect Atari Vendor's to Honestly sell Atari Products when you yourself are well known for *RIPPING* people off on the Hard Drives That you Sell!!

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Hey Elwood we see you have to hide behind a name and personal attacks will get you no where.ga

(Elwood)[76057,3210] I would not make this up.. I have a list of your download from 3 days ago...here it is...

(Elwood)[76057,3210] b2THE BOUNTY ST BBS
b3 Download Directory - GAME
Select> a

Number	Filename	Length	U/L'ed	Description
396)	AIRWAR.ARC	163200	03/30/88	Hot new game called Air War.Multi-Pla
397)	BRDG2000.ARC	62464	02/11/88	Wanna play Bridge??...go for it.
398)	HGAMMON.ARC	107520	02/11/88	BackGammon very nice...you and "Hal"
399)	HIQ.ARC	18432	03/20/88	the classic JUMP THE PEG game.

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400) REVERSI.ARC      14336  04/09/88  NOT TO BAD/S
401) HOTSHT18.ARC    43008  04/26/88  This is Hot Shot Checkers ver. 1.8.
402) WHEELOF2.ARC    125952 05/15/88  Wheel of Fortune 2.0.....unarc
403) SAB_V165.ARC    126976 07/18/88  Statistically accurate baseball..You
404) LODERNNR.ARC     43008  03/13/88  Loderunner clone - Sorry, monochrome
405) CLIMBER.MAC      32768  03/13/88  MAC SAC game. Dodge those elevators!
406) 3D_DEMSI.PIT    15744  05/27/88  A third dimension game for MAC....
407) HOTSEX.BIN       5120   05/27/88  A fair game for the MAC
408) PNGERAM.PIT      4096   05/27/88  This is a decent game for the MAC
409) CRIBBAGE.ARC     45440  06/04/88  The game of Cribbage, NEW from GENie
410) STARTRAS.ARC    106496 06/03/88  Beautiful demo of a game "yet to be"
(Elwood)[76057,3210] [N]ext [D]ownload [Q]uit:

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Number	Filename	Length	U/L'ed	Description
411)	SNAKE.PIT	66048	06/05/88	A MAC game. The old but fun game
412)	ESCAPE.ARC	83840	06/05/88	maze game from GENie
413)	SHIPCOM.ARC	46080	06/12/88	good pd game of ship combat...unarc
414)	SUMERCHL.ARC	138240	06/15/88	Working Demo of Summer Challenge
415)	LABRYNTH.ARC	30720	06/16/88	Move the ball around the maze
416)	TUNNELV.ARC	72704	06/16/88	Don't let thew size fool you..
417)	MACGAMES.ARC	124928	06/19/88	This is a group of PD Games
418)	VIRUS.ARC	66026	08/26/88	Virus neat new one full of action....
419)	JETIBM.ARC	44288	09/27/88	IBM VERS OF JETD
420)	MANFIX.PRG	1024	02/27/88	fixing the garbage on the screen
421)	MACGAMES.ARC	41600	05/14/88	Three in one games for the mac sac.
422)	TREKNEXT.ARC	323584	06/14/88	Star Trek...The Next Generation!!
423)	PENGY.PRG	47104	07/01/88	By popular demand...Like Pengo
424)	CTC8S.ARC	55936	07/02/88	Crazy 8s
425)	YAHTZEE.ARC	26624	07/03/88	YAHTZEE for the IBM...
426)	OIDSGALX.ARC	25728	08/26/88	Oids accessory galaxies.....
427)	GALAXIES.ARC	12288	08/26/88	More oids galaxies.....
428)	LAWNS.ARC	62464	08/26/88	Mow the lawn....nice grafix
429)	BRICK.ARC	43008	09/05/88	A pd arcade game..not bad....unarc
430)	VOYAGE.ARC	595968	07/08/88	VOYAGE..
431)	GOLDEN.ARC	317952	07/18/88	Graphix adventure game.. Excellent
432)	NORTH.ARC	84992	07/23/88	GREAT GAME FROM EUROPE1
433)	SUPERSKI.ARC	337024	07/24/88	cool ski simulation! graphix
434)	STR_GANG.ARC	530688	07/25/88	Street Gang, NOT the same thing
435)	BERMUDA1.ARC	324608	07/26/88	Bermuda Project, Disk 1 of 2...
436)	BERMUDA2.ARC	342016	07/26/88	Bermuda Project, disk 2 of 2...
437)	STRCRZYA.ARC	244864	07/28/88	BRAND NEW FROM ENGLAND, STIRCRAZY
438)	DEMONIAC.ARC	246912	07/30/88	Super Addicting Arcade with Editor
439)	STRCRZYP.ARC	210176	07/28/88	DISK 2 OF STRCRZYA.ARC.
440)	PHANTASM.ARC	129024	07/30/88	NEW EUROPEAN GAME....

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(Elwood)[76057,3210] [N]ext [D]ownload [Q]uit:
Number Filename      Length  U/L'ed  Description
441) GOLD2SEN.ARC    255488 08/05/88  scenery disk for goldrunner II
442) SUPRSTAR.ARC    227456 08/08/88  Super Star Ice Hockey..
443) 8BITSTUF.ARC    286720 08/09/88  This file contains over 20 8 bit
444) SKRULL.ARC      497792 08/21/88  Just check this one out
445) FRECLIMB.ARC    301696 09/01/88  FreeClimb Climb Mountains
446) INDY500.ARC     405192 09/06/88  VERY NICE RACING GAME
447) MIKMOUSE.ARC    499329 09/06/88  WORKING COPY OF MIKEY MOUSE.....
448) HEROS_12.ARC    429056 09/07/88  Hero's Of the Lance disks ONE TWO..
449) HEROS_3.ARC     168960 09/07/88  Disk Three of heros of the Lance....
450) ARMYMOVE.ARC    111872 09/16/88  Moon buggy type game
451) NEBULUS.ARC     231424 09/22/88  A nice one enjoy .....unarc

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(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Elwood- stop please. ...

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452) OVERLAND.ARC    212992 09/22/88  This one works

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453) HEROCRAK.ARC 39442 09/22/88 The fix for Heros
454) RANSOM_A.ARC 297984 09/22/88 Twilight's Ransom....disk 1 of 3
455) RANSOM_B.ARC 252829 09/22/88 Twilight's Ransom.....disk 2 of 2

(Elwood)[76057,3210] should I continue ralph? There is about a 100 k..
more on this list... its numbers into the thousands

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Many of these I recognize as PD files.

(Elwood)[76057,3210] I am sick and tired of atari being destroy by pirates

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] I dont know all the rest.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Certainly, any download list can be
modified with a text editor and my BBS

(Elwood)[76057,3210] There are MANY MANY more pirated files on
this list as it goes on.. I will mail it to any one on request

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] does not have 1000's of files

(Elwood)[76057,3210] I FIGURED YOU'D SAY THAT RALPH

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] ga

(Elwood)[76057,3210] I stopped the listing on the request of the SYSOP on
this conference

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Thank you for stopping Elwood, but you've
leveled serious charges. .Ralph, for the record, whats your response? ga

(Elwood)[76057,3210] They are all true.. Give me your ID number
and Ill send you a list of some PASSWORDS and HANDLES to his system

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Elwood, you better stop this now.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] That list could be from anywhere as it
opened up with a pure PD listing then showed files I've never heard of

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Before we get into legal problems.

(Elwood)[76057,3210] You've ripped people off enough RALPH!
Your Exposed!

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] As a matter of fact, the beginning
portion of the list was PD and the rest is not from my BBS...ga

(Elwood)[76057,3210] AND THE REST?? And the REST i did not show!

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Elwood, this isnt a court of law and I suggest you
stop....

(Elwood)[76057,3210] The Bounty (Pirate) Bbs (904) 786-4176

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] These charges cannot be proven or refuted here.

% Moderator recognizes queue #9

ROBERT <14>

(ROBERT)[73457,2135] Sorry I waz cut off before from cis. As I was saying.
I'm wondering about the level of professionalism of a so called NEWS

JOURNAL. A journal....which protects both reporters and sources (why would....reporters need protecting? I've never heard....that before), a journal which has printed....more than once inaccurate information....on a number of subjects, and a journal which throws tantrums....such as saying one week they are off GENIE, the next week they are off DELPHI, then they are back on genie the week....after next and so on. What is your standards of professionalism??? ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] First of all we are only protecting contributors not reporters. Secondly, professionalism is in the eyes of the beholder.

(ROBERT)[73457,2135] If contributors write articles..for a news journal, I'd call them reporters. No? Ralph: What is your background in journalism?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] I doubt very much that you can honestly say we print inaccurate information consistently. ga

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] One sec...We print information we get from the services and from people who send material to us. When we print information without a proper check, we get into minor.. problems, because those facts are either wrong or there are inaccurate to some extent. The problem on GENIE was started because of a problem with.. communication between the magazines. We have solved the communication problem.. and look forward to a better relationship in the future. I hope this answers your question. ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Ron & Ralph-- wouldnt this issue be settled if you started crediting where ...your material originated? ga

(ROBERT)[73457,2135] thanks ron...I'm also interested in hearing more about your backgrounds in journalism.ga.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] When it's possible to include a contributor's name, it is readily done so. My background is volunteer..ga

(ROBERT)[73457,2135] huh?

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] Zmag includes names on all articles when we know who they are. SOMETIMES the material I get..isnt authored and I cannot credit the proper source. My background in journalism has been..a learning exp... from three years on stumbling and correcting my errors. ga

% Moderator recognizes queue #10
David R. <7>

(David R.)[76515,3055] OK... This is a little more than a page long so grab your capture buffers.

Whoops... Using Flash, as you can see :)

First, Ron and Ralph, this is not an attack and slash question.

I feel that you do help a lot of Atari users out with your magazine and you have put a lot of time and effort into your work. I would just like to find out about a few vague references that you made in ST-Report#58 (October 24).

- 1) "ALMOST.....on a DAILY basis we Hear or Read: 'We will not be researching or developing any further products for the Atari ST.'"
- 2) You say that Atari will not release the sales information

to the developers because it is confidential information, and yet, since they went public with their stock, that information is provided with each quarterly report that stockholders receive. It should be freely given to developers, but it is available if they look around.

3) "They have managed to alienate almost two thirds of the sincere developers in this country interested in them."

4) You have a note from a "prominent" developer saying how much

(David R.)[76515,3055] received a congratulatory letter from Apple. The first page of my Atari developer's documentation thanks me and I also received a personal phone call from Cindy Claveran explaining to me who to talk to about questions or problems along with a "thank you" letter from her with the package.

You mentioned Word Perfect in your article... since I must be one of the "third" left and if it won't hurt any of your confidential sources (which I respect your right to do), would you name off a few of the "two-thirds" who left, tell us who this "prominent" developer is, and tell us where this information was taken from?? ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] As far as the prominent developer is concerned, he is at this time quite active in the Atari field but has in fact become a developer for another computer company and has stated off the record that his current project is his last for the ST unless Atari mends its ways. Also the Word Perfect statement was a public release from Word Perfect.ga

(David R.)[76515,3055] But no names of the dozens of others who have left according to the article?

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] I can verify Ralph's statements from this 'developer' who asked to be anonymous.

(David R.)[76515,3055] I don't question the note from the developer. I was just wondering if they could say who it was. But, I will respect the right of that person to remain anonymous.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] It should be very evident by the lack of new and innovative goodies from third party developers for the better part of this year..ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] David-- did your whole question get answered?

(David R.)[76515,3055] I guess that's all I'll get... thanks.
ga

% Moderator recognizes queue #12
JOHN NAGY <4>

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] I haven't seen an answer all night...just responses. I guess we got REX here tonight instead of Ralph. I pass.
ga

% Moderator recognizes queue #13
Elwood <11>

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Your comments are well taken and understood and in your case, you're right.ga

(Elwood)[76057,3210] Please when your all done with this conference Look at your Mail! GA bye

% Moderator recognizes queue #14
Dave Small <10>

(Dave Small)[76606,666] Do you feel a 68030 box will be released at Comdex? .ga.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] First Dave, let me congratulate you on Spector 128...I love it! Now a 68030 box is very much in Atari's future and I would not be surprised...if we saw it at Comdex.ga

(Dave Small)[76606,666] ok, thank you.. .ga.

% Moderator recognizes queue #15
Pattie Rayl <12>

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] Ralph, how do you think your brand of accusatory journalism better serve the Atari community than a "gentler" approach?ga.

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Pattie, my brand of journalism according to many of the readers has been a refreshing difference. I am sure that as ST Report matures, we will see more and more of the gentler approach.ga

(Pattie Rayl)[71361,411] So is the National Enquirer, but no one takes it seriously. ga

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] Pattie, the only thing I can say about being called the National Enquirer is that at least people are reading and taking the time to give it a nick name.ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] okay, I have a question for Ron and Ralph.... Do you have any stats on how many people read each issue?....i.e.- whats your circulation.And please state how you came up with the number. ga

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] Zmag is currently displayed on 300 BBS systems. most being 8 bit boards, they get downloads ...ranging from 5-50 downloads each,. On the services Zmag is at approx. 30-50 each week, depending on content I guess. I get these numbers by asking the sysops from time to time when I call them personally. ST-Reports counts can be given by Ralph. ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Ralph? how about STR?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] ST Report currently enjoys close to 1200 downloads per month on another service...on this service and another it's another 1000 there...and throughout the private BBS community we can only guess conservatively... the amounts being in excess of 7 to 10K per month. Also ...ST Report can be found circulated on a monthly disk that accompanies a monthly...hard copy magazine. So whatever their circulation is.. ours is.ga

% Moderator recognizes queue #16
JOHN NAGY <4>

(JOHN NAGY)[72327,3042] I wanted to say that i never expected to take the offensive with you Ralph, but your comments and responses took me WAY

off gaurde. I expected answers and some openness, like you exhibit in ST report...I want to thank you sincerely for the obvious work and research you do for the mag, and if it had no redeeming values, it would never be popular enough to be a subject of debate. I nevertheless ask for a bit more reporting and a bit straighter commentary... obviously, thats just my request, but i send it with good faith and respects. ga.

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Ralph-- closing comments?

(R.Mariano-ST Report)[73710,1052] OK.....you took the offensive, you said your piece...

In closing:

I would like to say to everybody here and anyone who reads the transcript that we will continually strive to improve ST Report in any way possible...but the bottom line is to "Say it like we see it", no sugar coating no pabulum, and above all else, no fear of any critique from anybody. ...

We will however, continue to take every effort to ensure accuracy to the best of our ability...and if we make mistakes, we're only human. Thanks for coming this evening... and a special thanks to Elwood for giving us more notoriety...

PT Barnum once said, "I don't care what they're saying about us, as long as they're talking about US"! Good night all..ga

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] Ron Kovacs--closing comments?

(Ron Kovacs)[71777,2140] Thank you everyone for attending. I am not sure what you expected to see,..but Ralph Mariano has his style and we either have to like it or we have the choice of not reading the material. Zmag has been the quiet magazine and probably always be, that is my personal style.....ST-Report is popular because of the sensational writing done.. by R Mariano. You are all welcome to comment and I would appreciate it if you...would send your comments to Ralph via the mail systems so that he can see what you think. It has been going on three years and I hope we are at least...getting better with age. Thanks again! Goodnight!..!

(SYSOP-Ron)[76703,254] okay-- goodnite all. thx for attending.

The conference has ended Thank you for attending

The inserts provided below are here to prove that we have a capture of what Elwood saw during the CO....the following are excerpts of 'behind the scenes' conversation between Elwood and various people attending the CO. They are included here as reference only.

Job#	PPN#		
User	User ID	Nod	Name
----	-----	---	-----
1	76615,2013	WBR	Dick_H
2	76703,254	DFL	SYSOP-Ron
3	73457,2135	LIU	ROBERT
4	72327,3042	LSM	JOHN NAGY

5	71777,2140	GBO	Ron Kovacs
6	73710,1052	JAX	R.Mariano-ST Report
7	76515,3055	LAF	David R.
8	76703,4363	LIS	Mike
9	73217,2204	FYN	deborah penxa
10	76606,666	DEQ	Dave Small
11	76057,3210	FLM	Elwood
12	71361,411	ANN	Pattie Rayl
14	72077,43	BOU	kk
15	70003,1745	MAU	paul weinstein

;;V_ARTS: - Job 10: I'm requesting .. will be *happy* to write it up for
Current Notes

;;V_ARTS: - Job 12: Could you send that entire capture to 71361,411

;;V_ARTS: - Job 10: if you'll type /send 10 (text) you can send back
to me.

;;V_ARTS: - Job 10: if you'll give me a PW, I'll sign in on another
machine to that board..

/send 10 ok.. yes Ill send it to you

;;V_ARTS: - Job 10: board is busy right now.

;;V_ARTS: - Job 10: no problem

/SEND 2 is there some way I could call and talk to you after this
Conference? Also Leave u mail

;;V_ARTS: - Job 2: yes. i'll send you my number after its done.

;;V_ARTS: - Job 2: my number is xxx-xxx-xxxx. call in 5 minutes.

;;V_ARTS: - Job 12: Sure xxx-xxx-xxxx

Noting that there would be no way for us to have seen these "behind
the scenes messages" it tends to add to the validity of what we have to
say..

We received a complete capture of what Elwood saw on 'his' screen.
Folks, there are enough users out there who are acquainted with us well
enough to know that the entire tirade from "Elwood & Co." is nothing more
than malicious, immature SLANDER.

ELWOOD'S POSTSCRIPT
=====

Conf : ST REPORT

Msg# : 1268 Lines: Extended Read: 1
Sent : Nov 14, 1988 at 8:02 AM
Recv : Nov 14, 1988
To : SYSOP
From : ELWOOD
Subj : The MSG

An open letter to the readers of ST Report.

On November 9th, 1988 a mistake was made. Before an attempt at explanation is made, understand this: There are large numbers of Atari owners who still care about the futures of their Machines. Events of the last 6 months seem to point to a accelerated demise of the ST Computer in America. While many people are willing to be counted among the doomsayers, very few are willing to display the open confidence in the ST line that was prevalent just a short time ago. Although the print media, more often than not, does not report negative news, the doomsayers are heard by an estimated 20 - 40% of the ST population via the electronic news.

Sister publications Zmag and ST Report are among the most widely read free information services. While Zmag continually attempts to perform artificial respiration upon the 8bit carcass, ST Report often seems to be Hell bent on destroying what little faith remains in all ST users. While many of us may agree with the often valid complaints raised by "REX READE" the often brutal methods used by ST Report to convey their gripes more often than not only serve to isolate and intimidate the very pillars and founding fathers of the Atari community as a whole. With this in mind, please attempt to understand the following.

Those of us who still believe in the future of Atari in America are more and more being pushed to the wall. With Atari itself at, seemingly, a 10 year low with domestic customer and developer relations, the mantle of user support has more and more fallen to independent user groups and their electronic counterparts - the bulletin board system. Thus, mediums such as St Report come to have a weighted influence in the ST community.

With this in mind, the mistake was made of trying to attempt to discredit ST Report by Myself and several Others. Having been given a "listing" of supposed copywritten materials to be found on a The Bulletin Board System ooperated by ST Report Editor Ralph Mariano and an account which allegedly would support the listing, only minutes before a Teleconference was to be held on Compuserve, we elected to display the information openly on the conference with the intent of verifying it as soon as possible after the CO. After having made the allegations based upon this material the original source confidentially admitted the entire listing to have been a hoax. I now at this time publicly apologize for any and all damages which may have occurred to either ST Report and Ralph Mariano, or the Bounty BBS.

11/14/88 "Elwood"

ELWOOD may be reached through The Crypt BBS, 313-743-8037

POCKET WHAT?

by George Keller

As a follow-up to a recent ST Report Confidential Item, here are a few more tidbits about the "Atari Pocket Computer" or, as it's being billed.. "The Atari Pocket PC" (the housewife's companion (?)). This jewel will have 256k ROM/512k RAM and programs are to be imported via the rs232 port. Reliable sources in the U.K. expect to see this baby available for sale to the general public by January 1989. A casual observation is that Comdex at this point in time is going to be mediocre at best...There is really no major reference to Atari's answer to postscript and a plethora of so-called new and innovative goods are genuinely obvious by their absence.

Truly, it becomes easier and easier to believe the industry wide comment; "Atari indicates it believes Europe is its domestic market and the USA and Canada are the International market." Just a point to ponder, what if Atari would just put the machines in place to satisfy the demand that is there for them, what a wonderful Atari market there would be!

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Sunnyvale, CA -----	Look at the high res monitor, 1260 x 980 and the EST, with it's 68030 and DSP 56001 (Motorola)..more colors and better sound, why it's an Amiga Killer!
Las Vegas, NV -----	PC Ditto show off new found speed and delights unknown to the average user.
Houston, TX -----	The Chamber of Commerce here has removed the Roldex card with Atari's name and number on it from the holder and placed it in file 13.
Orem, UT -----	Word Perfect Corp. is making a strong effort to have it's German language version completed very shortly. We wish 'em all the success possible, in fact, we hope the UK version sells like crazy and it starts the ball rolling again..perhaps Atari US can learn from Atari UK
Los Angeles, CA -----	Dynacad fans will be glad to know that the new monitor from Moniterm, will be available by mid December, that includes Monitor and card for a scant \$1995.00.
San Diego, CA -----	FTL Games/Software Heaven, has announced that Dungeon Master, "The Revenge of Kaos" will be available for the ST by the third week in December (This is the Sequel) also, for the Amiga Fans, a playtest version is being put through it's paces. It won't be long now.
Las Vegas, NV -----	Comdex The laptop, or Atari portable is making a debut, of sorts, hopefully this is the true beginning of the ..."NEW ERA" for Atari....we sure hope so.

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So I fibbed a little. This issue (#12) of ST PRO GEM started out to be another discussion of interface issues. But, as Tolkien once said, the tale grew in the telling, and this is now the first of a series of three articles. This part will discuss AES event handling and its implications for GEM program structure. The following article will contain a "home brew" dialog handler with some new features, and the third will, finally, take up the discussion of interface design, using the dialog handler as an example. (There is no download for this article. The downloads will return, with a vengeance, in ST PRO GEM #13.)

ALL FOR ONE, AND ONE FOR ALL. A quick inspection of the AES documents shows that there are five routines devoted to waiting for individual types of events, and one routine, `evnt_multi`, which is used when more than one type is desired. This article will discuss ONLY `evnt_multi` for two reasons. First, it is the most frequently used of the routines. Second, waiting for one type of event is a bad practice. Any event call turns the system over to the AES and suspends the application and its interaction with the user. In such cases, some "escape clause", such as a timer, should be inserted to revive the program and prompt the user if no event is forthcoming. Otherwise, the application may end up apparently (or actually) hung, with a resulting reboot, and probably a very annoyed user.

STARTING AHEAD. One possible type of event is a message. Messages are usually sent to the application by the AES, and are associated with windows or the menu. Two previous articles in this series have discussed such messages. ST PRO GEM number two considered window messages, and number seven handled menu messages. You may want to review these topics before proceeding.

The actual `evnt_multi` call is a horrendous thing:

```
ev_which = evnt_multi(ev_flags,
    btn_clicks, btn_mask, btn_state,
    r1_flags, r1_x, r1_y, r1_w, r1_h,
    r2_flags, r2_x, r2_y, r2_w, r2_h,
    &msg_buff,
    time_lo, time_hi,
    &mx, &my, &btn, &kbd, &char, &clicks);
```

Each of the lines in the call relate to a different event, and they will be discussed in the order in which they appear.

Note that a call with this number of parameters causes some overhead due to stacking and retrieval of the values. In most cases, this should be of little concern on a machine as fast as the ST. However, where throughput is a concern, such as in close tracking of the mouse cursor, you may want to write a customized binding for `evnt_multi` which dispenses with the parameter list. This can be accomplished by maintaining the values in a static array and moving them as a block into the binding arrays `int_in` (for all values but `&msg_buff`), and `addr_in` (for `&msg_buff`). Note that you may NOT simply leave the values in `int_in`; other AES bindings reuse this space.

`Ev_flags` and `ev_which` are both 16-bit integers composed of

flag bits. Bits set in `ev_flags` determine which event(s) the call will wait for; those set in `ev_which` indicate what event(s) actually occurred. Both use the following flag bit mnemonics and functions:

- 0x0001 - MU_KEYBD - Keyboard input
- 0x0002 - MU_BUTTON - Mouse button(s)
- 0x0004 - MU_M1 - Mouse rectangle #1
- 0x0008 - MU_M2 - Mouse rectangle #2
- 0x0010 - MU_MESAG - AES message
- 0x0020 - MU_TIMER - Timer

The appropriate mnemonics are ORed together to create the proper `ev_flags` value.

There is one common pitfall here. Notice that multiple events may be reported from one `evnt_multi`. Event merging is performed by the AES in order to save space on the application's event queue. If events have been merged, more than one bit will be set in the `ev_which` word. Your application must check ALL of the bits before returning to a new `evnt_multi` call. If you don't do this, some events may be effectively lost.

The first event to be considered is the mouse button. This is probably the most difficult event to understand and use, and it has one major shortcoming.

The parameter `btn_clicks` tells GEM the maximum number of clicks which you are interested in seeing. This value is usually two, if your program uses the double-click method, or one if only single clicks are used. The AES returns the number of clicks which caused the event through `&clicks`, which must be a pointer to a word.

GEM determines the number of clicks by the following method. When the first button-down is detected, a time delay is begun. If another complete button-up, button-down cycle is detected before the time expires, then the result is a double click. Otherwise, the event is a single click. Note that the final state of the buttons is returned via `&btn`, as described below. By checking this final state, you may determine whether a single click event ended with the button up (a full click), or with the button still down (which may be interpreted as the beginning of a drag operation). Double clicking is meaningless, and not checked, if the `evnt_multi` is waiting on more than one button (see below).

The double-click detection delay is variable, and may be set by your program using the call

```
ev_dspped = ev_dclick(ev_dnew, ev_dfunc);
```

`Ev_dfunc` is a flag which determines the purpose of the call. If it is zero, the current double click speed is returned in `ev_dspped`. If `ev_dfunc` is non-zero, then `ev_dnew` becomes the new double-click speed. Both `ev_dspped` and `ev_dnew` are words containing a "magic number" between zero and four. Zero is the slowest (i.e., longest) double-click, and four is the fastest. (These correspond to the slow-fast range in the Desktop's Preferences dialog.) In general, you should not reset the click speed unless specifically requested, because such a change can

throw off the user's timing and destroy the hand/eye coordination involved in using the mouse.

GEM was originally designed to work with a single button input device. This allows GEM applications to function well with devices such as light pens and digitizing tablets. However, some features are available for dealing with multi-button mice like the ST's.

The `evnt_multi` parameters `btn_mask` and `btn_state` are words containing flag bits corresponding to buttons. The lowest order bit corresponds to the left-most button, and so on. A bit is set in the `btn_mask` parameter if the AES is to watch a particular button. The corresponding bit in `btn_state` is set to the value for which the program is waiting. The word returned via `&btn` uses the same bit system to show the state of the buttons at completion. It is important to notice that all of the target states in `btn_state` must occur SIMULTANEOUSLY for the event to be triggered.

Note the limiting nature of this last statement. It prevents a program from waiting for EITHER the left or right button to be pressed. Instead, it must wait for BOTH to be pressed, which is a difficult operation at best. As a result, the standard mouse button procedure is practically useless if you want to take full advantage of both buttons on the ST mouse. In this case, your program must "poll" the mouse state and determine double-clicks itself. (More on polling later.) By the way, many designers (myself included) believe that using both buttons is inherently confusing and should be avoided anyway.

MOUSE RECTANGLES. One of GEM's nicer features is its ability to watch the mouse pointer's position for you, and report an event only when it enters or departs a given screen region. Since you don't have to track the mouse pixel by pixel, this eliminates a lot of application overhead. The `evnt_multi` call gives you the ability to specify one or two rectangular areas which will be watched. An event can be generated either when the mouse pointer enters the rectangle, or when it leaves the rectangle. The "`r1_`" series of parameters specifies one of the rectangles, and the "`r2_`" series specifies the other, as follows:

```
r1_flag, r2_flag - zero if waiting to enter rectangle,
                  one if waiting to leave rectangle
r1_x, r2_x - upper left X raster coordinate of wait rectangle
r1_y, r2_y - upper left Y raster coordinate of wait rectangle
r1_w, r2_w - width of wait rectangle in pixels
r1_h, r2_h - height of wait rectangle in pixels
```

Each rectangle wait will only be active if its associated flag (`MU_M1` or `MU_M2`) was set in `ev_flags`.

There are two common uses of rectangle waits. The first is used when creating mouse-sensitive regions on the screen. Mouse-sensitive regions, also called "hot spots", are objects which show a visual effect, such as inversion or outlining, when the mouse cursor moves over them. The items in a menu dropdown, or the inversion of Desktop icons during a drag operation, are common examples.

Hot spots are commonly created by grouping the sensitive objects into one or two areas, and then setting up a mouse rectangle wait for entering the area. When the event is generated, the `&mx` and `&my` returns may be examined to find the true mouse coordinates, and `objc_find` or some other search will determine the affected object. The object is then highlighted, and a new wait for exiting the object rectangle is posted. (ST PRO GEM #13 will show how to create more complex effects with rectangle waits.)

The second common use of rectangle waits is in animating a drag operation. In many cases, you can use standard AES animation routines such as `graf_dragbox` or `graf_rubberbox`. In other cases, you may want a figure other than a simple box, or desire to combine waits for other conditions such as keystrokes or collision with hotspots. Then you will need to implement the drag operation yourself, using the mouse rectangles to track the cursor.

If you want to track the cursor closely, simply wait for exit on a one pixel rectangle at the current position, and perform the animation routine at each event. If the drag operation only works on a grid, such as character positions, you can specify a larger wait rectangle and only update the display when a legal boundary is crossed.

MESSAGES. The `&msg_buff` parameter of `evnt_multi` gives the address of a 16 byte buffer to receive an AES message. As noted above, I have discussed standard AES messages elsewhere. The last column also mentioned that messages may be used to simulate co-routines within a single GEM program.

A further possibility which bears examination is the use of messages to coordinate the activities of multiple programs. In single-tasking GEM, at least one of these programs would have to be a desk accessory. In any such use of the GEM messages, you should pay careful attention to the possibility of overloading the queue. Only eight slots are provided per task, and messages, unlike events, cannot be merged by the AES.

TIMER. The timer event gives you a way of pacing action on the screen, clocking out messages, or providing a time-out exit for an operation. `Evnt_multi` has two 16-bit timer input parameters, `time_hi` and `time_lo`, which are the top and bottom halves, respectively, of a 32-bit millisecond count. However, this documented time resolution must be taken with a grain of salt on the ST, considering that its internal clock frequency is 200Hz!

The timer event is also extremely useful for polling the event queue. A "poll" tests the queue for completed events without going into a wait state if none are present. In GEM, this is done by generating a null event which always occurs immediately. A timer count of zero will do just that.

Therefore, you can poll for any set of events by specifying them in the `evnt_multi` parameters. A zero timer wait is then added to ensure immediate completion. Upon return, if any event bit(s) OTHER than `MU_TIMER` are set, a significant event was found on the queue. If only `MU_TIMER` is set, the poll failed to find an event.

KEYBOARD. There are no input parameters for the keyboard event. The character which is read is returned as a 16-bit quantity through the &char parameter. For historical reasons, the codes which are returned are compatible with the IBM PC's BIOS level scan codes. You can find this character table in Appendix D of the GEM VDI manual. In general, the high byte need only be considered if the lower byte is zero. If the low byte is non-zero, it is a valid ASCII character.

Evnt_multi also returns the status of several modifier keys through the &kbd parameter. This word contains four significant bits as follows:

- 0x0001 - Right hand shift key
- 0x0002 - Left hand shift key
- 0x0004 - Control key
- 0x0008 - ALT key

If a bit is one, the key was depressed when the event was generated. Otherwise, the key was up. Since the state of these keys is already taken into account in generating the &char scan code, the &kbd word is most useful when creating enhanced mouse functions, such as shift-click or control-drag.

RANDOM NOTES ON EVENTS. Although the &mx, &my, &btn, and &kbd returns are nominally associated with particular event types, they are valid on any return from evnt_multi, and reflect the last event which was merged into that return by the AES. If you want more current values, you may use graf_mkstate to resample them. Whichever method you choose, be consistent within the application, since the point of sampling has an effect on mouse and keyboard timing.

Although this and preceding columns have been presented in terms of a GEM application, the event system has many interesting implications for desk accessories. Since the AES scheduler uses non-preemptive dispatching, accessories have an event priority effectively equal to the main application. Though "typical" accessories wait only for AC_OPEN or AC_CLOSE messages when in their quiescent state, this is not a requirement of the system. Timer and other events may also be requested by an accessory. (Indeed, there is no absolute requirement that an accessory advertise its presence with a menu_register call.) The aspiring GEM hacker might consider how these facts could be used to create accessories similar to "BUGS" on the Mac, or to the "Crabs" program described in the September, 1985 issue of Scientific American.

EVENTS AND GEM PROGRAM STRUCTURE. Although the evnt_multi call might seem to be a small part of the entire GEM system, its usage has deep implications for the structure of any application. It is generally true that each use of evnt_multi corresponds to a mode in the program. For instance, form_do contains its own evnt_multi, and its invocation creates a moded dialog. While the dialog is in progress, other features such as windows and menus are unusable. The graf_dragbox, graf_rubberbox, and graf_slidebox routines also contain evnt_multi calls. They create a mode which is sometimes called "spring-loaded", since the mode vanishes when some continuing condition (a depressed mouse button) is removed.

In consequence, a well-designed, non-modal GEM program will contain only one explicit `evnt_multi` call. This call is part of a top-level loop which decodes events as they are received and dispatches control to the appropriate handling routine. The dispatcher must always distinguish between event types. In programs where multiple windows are used, it may also need to determine which local data structure is associated with the active window.

This construction is sometimes called a "push" program structure, because it allows the user to drive the application by generating events in any order. This contrasts with the "pull" structure of traditional command line or menu programs, where the application is in control and demands input at each step before it proceeds. "Push" structure promotes consistent use of the user interface and a feeling of control on the part of the user.

The next ST PRO GEM column will look more closely at events and program structure in the context of a large piece of code. The code implements an alternate dialog handler, incorporating mouse-sensitive objects as part of the standard interface. Since this code is "open", it may be modified and merged with any application's main event loop, resulting in non-modal dialogs.

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ST-REPORT Issue #61

November 14, 1988

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